

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 AID-05 /081 W

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R 291859Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8569

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCSO

UNCLAS CARACAS 4496

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR VE

SUBJ: VISIT BY PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: CARACAS 2071

BEGIN SUMMARY

TWO MONTHS AFTER HIS LAST TRIP HERE (REFTEL), PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER JUAN ANTONIO TACK VISITED CARACAS ON APRIL 25-28 AND MET WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ AND FOREIGN MINISTER RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM. END SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH PEREZ, TACK TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS TO ANALYZE VARIOUS POINTS IN THE RECENTLY-SIGNED DECLARATION OF PANAMA. TACK SAW THE DECLARATION NOT AS "SOMETHING ABSTRACT," BUT AS MEANS FOR ESTABLISHING "DIRECT COMMUNICATION" BETWEEN THE SIGNATORY COUNTRIES.

2. TACK, ACCOMPANIED BY ADVISOR JORGE ILLUECA, TOLD THE PRESS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT SEEK A CONFRONTATION WITH THE US., BUT ONLY WISHED THE ELIMINATION OF A "COLONIAL ENCLAVE" IN PANAMA AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CANAL BY PANAMANIAN THEMSELVES.

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TACK SAID THAT BOTH THE COLOMBIAN AND VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENTS

HAD GUARANTEED THEIR SUPPORT FOR PANAMANIAN POSITION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE STATED THAT THERE EXISTED AGREED FORMULATIONS ON SOME POINTS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US., AND HE HOPED THAT THE US. WOULD ADOPT A POSITION WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO PANAMA AND TO THE LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLE.

3. ASKED WHAT KIND OF BACKING HE EXPECTED FROM OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, TACK REPLIED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT'S FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE WAS TO SECURE FIRM SUPPORT FOR ITS CAUSE, IN THE FACE OF THE OPPOSITION TO A NEW TREATY WHICH STILL EXISTED IN SOME SECTORS OF THE US. HE BELIEVED THAT ALL OF LATIN AMERICA HAD AN INTEREST IN SEEING A "FORM OF COLONIALISM" ELIMINATED FROM THE CONTINENT. HE SAW THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AS A SHOWCASE IN WHICH THE LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLE COULD SEE WHETHER THE IMAGE OF THE US. HAS CHANGED OR REMAINED THE SAME.

4. TACK ALSO CONSULTED WITH THE GOV ON THE FORTHCOMING OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. HE TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE GOVERNMENTS OF PANAMA AND VENEZUELA HAD IDENTICAL GOALS FOR THE OAS: THE ORGANIZATION MUST BE CLOSE TO THE REAL PROBLEMS FACING THEIR PEOPLE AND SHOULD NO BE DOMINATED BY ANY POWER.

5. ACCORDING TO ONE PRESS REPORT, TACK ATTEMPTED TO GET PRESIDENT PEREZ'S SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S CANDIDACY FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN SEAT IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL, AND PEREZ INSTRUCTED THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO STUDY THE IDEA.
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